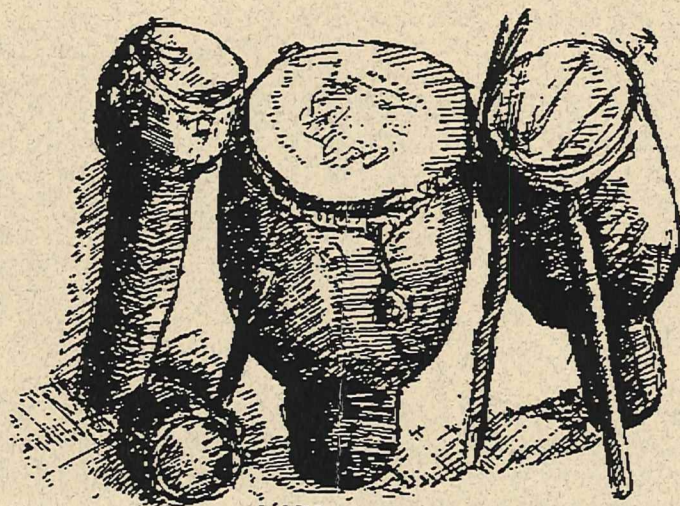


University of Toronto

C 95-17
Faculty of Music

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Robin Engelman, director



Dream of a spirit seer

Christopher Coleman

Jurij Konje, David Luginbühl, Che - Ming Tsai, Debbie Waugh

Noodrem (1992)

Bob Becker

Thomas Brett, Christine Huang,
David Luginbühl, Che - Ming Tsai, Debbie Waugh

Suite for Percussion (1940)

Lou Harrison

Thomas Brett, Christine Huang, Jurij Konje, Jerry Pergolesi, Ryan Scott

✧ intermission ✧

Second Construction (1940)

John Cage

Anthony Hall, Jurij Konje, Harri Lehtinen, Ryan Scott

Splash ! (1994)

Thomas Brett

Thomas Brett, Christine Huang, Harri Lehtinen
David Luginbühl, Ryan Scott, Debbie Waugh

Friday, February 24, 1995

8:00 pm

Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building
Admission Free, Information 978-3744

Programme Notes

Noodrem (1992)

Bob Becker

Noodrem was, for no particular reason, the first word that I learned in the Dutch language (the second word was *snert*). I enjoyed the sound of the word both in its correct Dutch pronunciation (*noat' rem*) and its usual, at least by me, American mispronunciation (*new' drum*). Although I selected this word as a title after the piece was finished, its basic definition -- "emergency brake", as well as several interesting English anagrams, did seem to bear some relationship to the music.

Noodrem was commissioned through the Canada Council by the Dutch ensemble *Slagwerkgroep den Haag*, and was completed in December, 1992. It is dedicated to all the members of this ensemble, past and present, with respect and affection.

Suite for Percussion (1940)

Lou Harrison

Born in 1917 in Portland, Oregon, Lou Harrison was a student of Henry Cowell and Arnold Schoenberg. His search for new sound sources has led him to organize his own percussion ensembles, and compose music scored for instruments considered unorthodox during the 1940's: brake drums, tin cans, and wash tubs. In addition, Harrison has studied Japanese and Korean music and has composed for the Indonesian gamelan.

In regards to his *Suite for Percussion*, Harrison states that his command of composition scored purely for percussion "was sufficient that I was making introspective personal expressions in the medium." The suite, for five percussionist, expresses a restlessness that presaged a country-wide trip that he was about to embark upon at the time.

Second Construction (1940)

John Cage

Born in 1912 in Los Angeles, John Cage studied piano in Los Angeles and Paris, and studied composition with Adolph Weiss, Arnold Schoenberg and Henry Cowell. In 1938-39 he was employed as a dance accompanist at the Cornish School in Seattle where he formed a percussion group. He developed Cowell's piano technique of using tone clusters and playing directly on the piano strings, leading to his invention of the "prepared piano" which uses various objects inserted between the strings of the piano in order to change the timbre of individual notes. As well, he developed the idea of indeterminate music, and employed the 'I Ching' in his compositional process. Cage was also an avid chess player and mycologist (mushroom expert) as well as being a prolific writer. Cage died in his New York apartment, which he shared with Merce Cunningham, in 1992.

Second Construction, for four percussionists, is one of three 'Constructions' composed between 1939 and 1941. These compositions rely on the repetition of small rhythmic patterns which mirror the larger formal structure of the piece, creating unity on both the micro and macro level.

Splash! (1994)

Thomas Brett

Splash! was composed between May and August 1994, and is scored for four marimbas and two vibraphones. I wrote the piece out of my interest in musics in which rhythm and harmony, rather than melody per se, predominate. A "drummer's" sensibility? Perhaps. Nevertheless, the harmonic texture of *Splash!* is largely determined by repeating and interlocking rhythmic patterns, while "melody" emerges almost incidentally. This compositional style is not shaped by any particular musical aesthetic (although there is a strong rhythmic influence of some non-Western cyclical musics, particularly West African drumming), but rather by the nature of percussion instruments themselves. Generally speaking, these instruments produce sounds of short duration, making repetition necessary if one wishes to create the impression of sustained sound. The "drummer's" sensibility then, is not only an inclination towards a certain kind of music; it also represents one of the many ways percussionists overcome the nature of instruments which speak to us in short tones: *boom, whaap, chick . . .* or, *splash*, for that matter.